Afghanistan’s Rural Digital Divide: Can IoT Unlock Agricultural Resilience?

A 2026 field study in Samangan and Balkh provinces finds that while 60% of farmers are aware of Internet of Things (IoT) technologies but only 30% have adopted them primarily for irrigation and soil monitoring. This is due to poor internet connectivity (70%), high device costs (60%), limited technical skills (65%), and social resistance rooted in traditional practices. Yet 70% express willingness to adopt IoT if training and institutional support are provided, highlighting a significant but unrealized opportunity for improving water efficiency, crop productivity, and environmental sustainability in rural Afghanistan. Discussion Questions: What infrastructure and financing reforms are necessary to make digital agriculture viable in fragile contexts? How can policymakers ensure marginalized farmers are not excluded from technological transitions? Can IoT meaningfully strengthen long-term rural resilience without parallel institutional reform?

Comments